

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the entire text of the final paragraph on page 12, lines 23-30, continuing onto page 13, lines 1-2, of the Application with the following:

Transduction efficiency PCR was used to detect proviral specific sequences. To obtain genomic DNA for PCR analysis, individual colonies were resuspended in 30ul of H₂O and boiled for 6 minutes. One µl of proteinase K solution 10 mg/ml was added and the colonies were incubated at 55°C for 2 hours and boiled again for 6 minutes. Six µl of each preparation was used per PCR reaction. Using sense primer 5'-TGGTACCTCACCTTACCGAGTC-3' (SEQ ID NO:1) containing sequences of the MFG proviral backbone, and the antisense primer 5'-ACACCTGTCTGGTGAACGAACGACTCT-3' (SEQ ID NO:2) specific to human *MGMT* (Reese et al. 1996), transduction efficiency was determined. The transduction efficiency of allogeneic hMSCs was 51±15.5; Dexter stroma, 50±11 (N=6); and FN, 63 (n=1), compared to 40% ± 13 (n=10) in the absence of stroma (see Table 1, column 5).

Please replace the entire text of the first full paragraph on page 5 of the Application with the following:

Mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) can be derived from marrow, periosteum, dermis and other tissues of mesodermal origin. The mesenchymal stem cells can be isolated and prepared according to methods known in the art, for example, a process for isolating, purifying, and expanding the marrow-derived mesenchymal stem cells in culture, *i.e. in vitro*, is described in U.S. Patent Nos. 5,197,985 and 5,226,914 and PCT Publication No. WO 92/22584 (1992), which are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety, as well as numerous literature references by Caplan and Haynesworth. The stem cells may be isolated from other cells by density gradient fractionation, such as by Percoll gradient fractionation. The human mesenchymal stem cells also can include a cell surface epitope specifically bound by antibodies from hybridoma cell line SH2, deposited with the ATCC under accession number HB10743; antibodies from hybridoma cell line SH3, deposited with the ATCC under accession number HB10744; or antibodies from hybridoma cell line SH4, deposited with the ATCC under accession number HB10745.